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ABSTRACT

The analyses in this presentation book, prepared by the Policy Research Division of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Office of Economic Opportunity, reflect poverty statistics based on data from the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census. These statistics reflect incomes of families and individuals which fall below specified income levels or poverty lines. These lines are adjusted to take account of such factors as family size, sex and age of the family head, number of children, and farm-nonfarm residence. Each year all poverty lines are adjusted by the Consumer Price Index so as to reflect changes in the cost of living. The poverty information contained in this book is presented in 28 tables and accompanying charts which are subdivided under the following headings: (1) Who are the Poor? (2) Some Selected Characteristics of the Poor; (3) Frequently Mentioned Poverty Groups; (4) The Increase in the Poverty Population between 1969 and 1970; and (5) Trends in the Poverty Population Over the Past Decade. (HBC)

THE POOR IN 1970: A CHARTBOOK

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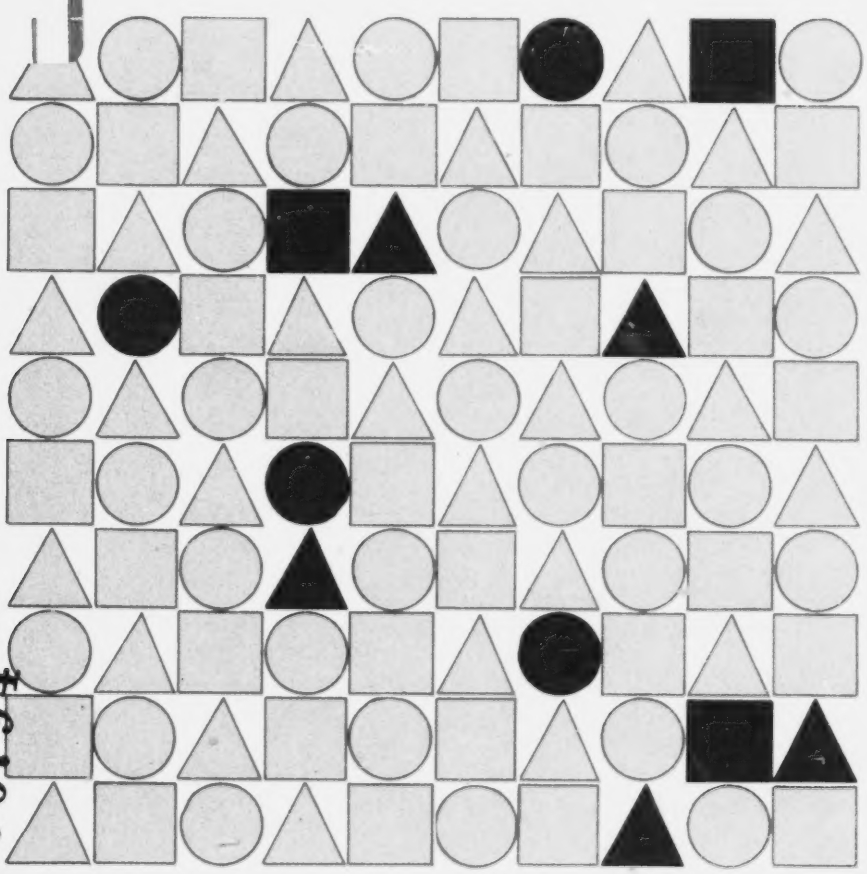

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The Poor 1970: A Chartbook

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NOTE

The analyses in this presentation book were prepared by Paul M. Ryscavage of the Policy Research Division in the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Office of Economic Opportunity.

The poverty statistics that were used are based on data from the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census. These statistics reflect incomes of families and individuals which fall below specified income levels or poverty lines. These lines are adjusted to take account of such factors as family size, sex and age of the family head, number of children and farm-nonfarm residence. In 1970, the poverty line for a nonfarm family of four, headed by a male was $3,970. Each year all poverty lines are adjusted by the Consumer Price Index so as to reflect changes in the cost of living.

For more detailed information relating to the definition of poverty or explanations of various terms used in the chartbook, see "24 Million American—Poverty in the United States: 1969," *Current Population Reports,* Series P-60, No. 76, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

INTRODUCTION

Until the early 1960's, there was a general belief that poverty was not a problem in this country. Then poverty was discovered, and ever since it has been a subject of concern and controversy.

The concern and controversy, of course, stemmed from the magnitude of the problem and the ways to fight it. Poverty was reduced substantially during the sixties, but the public discussion, if anything, heightened. With the exception of the war in Southeast Asia, no other topic has been discussed as widely and as heatedly from the halls of Congress to the street corners of our smallest towns.

Setting the debate aside, poverty is still a problem today. While this problem is plain enough to see in our urban ghettos and parts of rural America, its totality can be seen in the poverty statistics that the Federal Government issues each year. Indeed, the statistics issued this spring showed that the number of poor persons increased by 1.2 million in 1970, reinforcing the fact that poverty is still a problem in our Nation.

As the new decade unfolds, it is imperative that the dimensions of the problem be continually reexamined. For example, despite the decline in the number of poor persons in past years, in 1970:

- 26 million Americans were poor, or nearly 13 percent of our population,
- 10 million children were poor, about 1 of 6,
- nearly 8 million blacks were poor, or one-third of all blacks in the country,
- and 2.2 million Americans of Spanish origin were poor, or 1 out of every 4.

Furthermore, as we enter the 1970's, it is also important to clear up the misconceptions about the nature of poverty that have been spawned in the past. According to these misconceptions, for example, poverty was primarily a black problem, or a problem solely of the inner city, or that the poor were simply lazy, preferring to live off the dole rather than work. But as will be shown, in 1970:

- nearly 7 out of every 10 poor persons were white,
- only 32 percent of all poor persons lived in the central cities of our metropolitan areas,
- and practically all of the poor who could reasonably be expected to work, were working.

The charts in this book, therefore, are intended to do two things: to inform and to educate. As is known, this Administration is committed to a policy that will provide the poor with the help and assistance they need to remove themselves from poverty. It is my hope, therefore, that these charts will contribute to a better understanding of the challenge that confronts us and the job to which we are committed.

Phillip V. Sanchez
Director

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OF
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Who are the poor?

The following series of charts identifies the poor by a variety of demographic characteristics: age, sex, race, family status, metropolitan--nonmetropolitan areas, and geographic location.

It will be observed at the outset that the poor are primarily women, children, and the elderly. Other statistical breakdowns show that most of the poor are white and live in nonmetropolitan areas as well as in the inner cities.

The last chart in this section indicates the incidence of poverty among various groups of the poor. It shows that not all persons in our country have the same chance of being poor, and that poverty strikes hardest among blacks, female headed families, and the elderly and unrelated individuals.*

*Unrelated individuals are persons who live alone or with others to whom they are not related.

Chart 1.

The poor by age and sex 1970

The poor totaled 25.9 [1] million persons in 1970, and represented 12.8 percent of the Nation's population.*
The poverty population is composed primarily of children (less than 16 years of age), women (age 16 to 64) and the elderly (age 65 and over). In 1970

- nearly 4 out of every 10 poor persons were children,
- nearly 2 out of every 10 were elderly and
- 1 out of 4 was a female, age 16 to 64.

TABLE 1.

	Total	
	Number (000)	Percent
Total	25,886 [1]	100.0
Children, less than 16	10,033	38.8
Males, 16 to 64	4,355	16.8
Females, 16 to 64	6,789	26.2
Elderly, 65 and over	4,709	18.2

[1] See footnote on page 70.

*Because the absolute numbers and percentages have been rounded, they may not add to the totals in the charts or tables.

Poor Persons

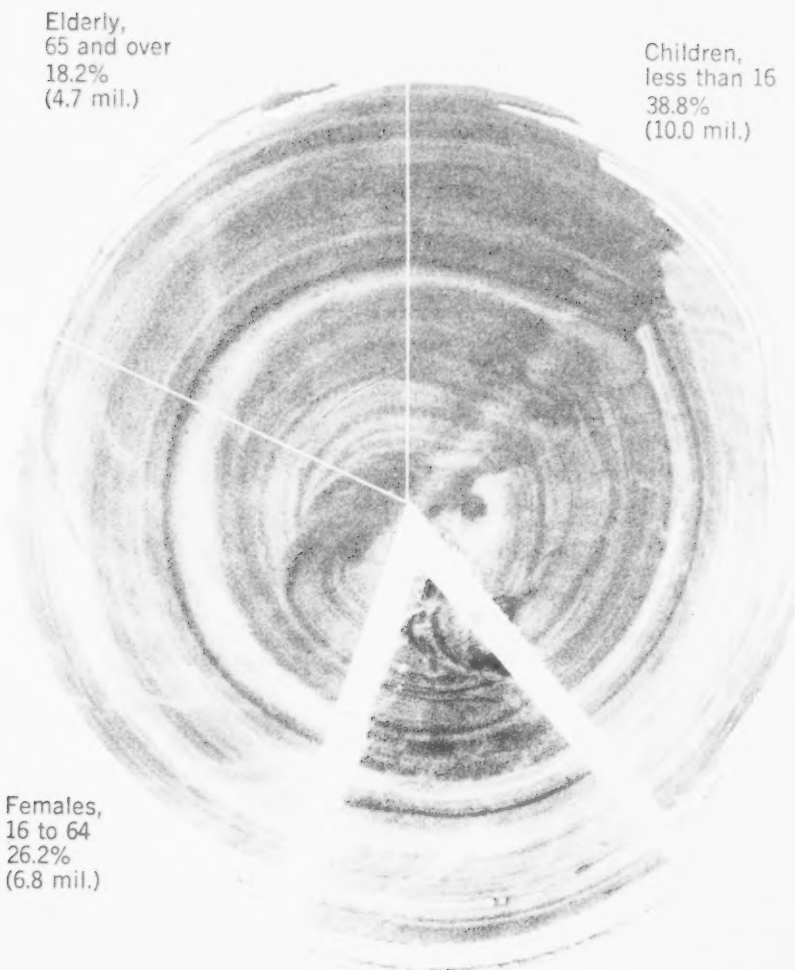


Chart 2.

The poor by race and ethnic origin 1970

Blacks and persons of Spanish origin account for a disproportionate share of all poor persons. While blacks represent slightly more than 10 percent of all persons in the Nation, they make up about 30 percent of the poverty population. Persons of Spanish origin account for about 4 percent of all persons but nearly 9 percent of the poor. The vast majority (97 percent) of poor persons of Spanish origin are white.

TABLE 2.

	Total	
	Number (000)	Percent
Total	25,522	100.0
Whites	17,480	68.5
Blacks	7,650	30.0
Other nonwhites *	392	1.5
Persons of Spanish origin *	(2,177)	(8.5)

* Other nonwhites refer to Indians, Japanese, Chinese and any other race except white and black. Persons of Spanish origin are those who are of Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish descent. They may be of any race, but about 97 percent were white. Consequently their addition to whites, blacks and other nonwhites who are poor will exceed the total poor.

Poor Persons

Other nonwhites,* 1.5% (0.4 mil.)

Blacks, 30.0% (7.7 mil.)

Whites, 68.5% (17.5 mil.)

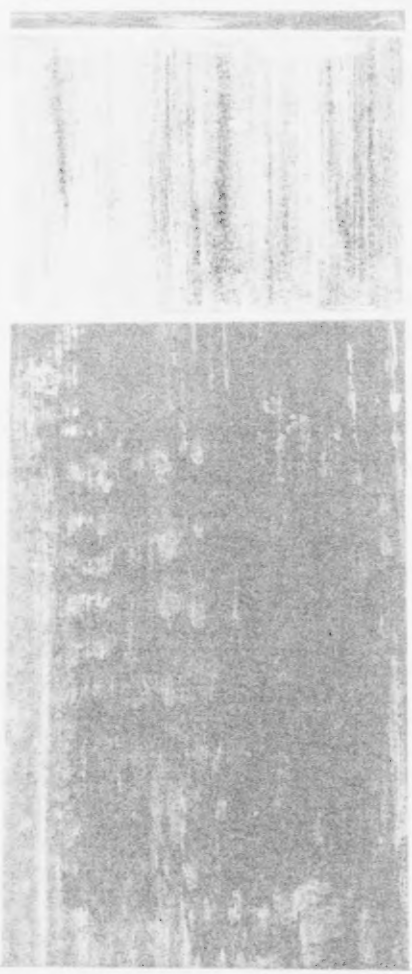


Chart 3.

The white and black poor by age and sex 1970

Sharp differences exist in the age-sex composition of the white poor and black poor. In 1970

- somewhat more than 3 out of 10 white poor persons were children and slightly more than 2 out of 10 were elderly, but about
- 5 out of 10 poor black persons were children and only 1 in 10 was elderly.

TABLE 3.

	White		Black	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	17,748	100.0	7,737	100.0
Children, less than 16	6,015	33.9	3,833	49.5
Males, 16 to 64	3,104	17.5	1,163	15.0
Females, 16 to 64	4,647	26.2	2,055	26.6
Elderly, 65 and over	3,984	22.4	683	8.8

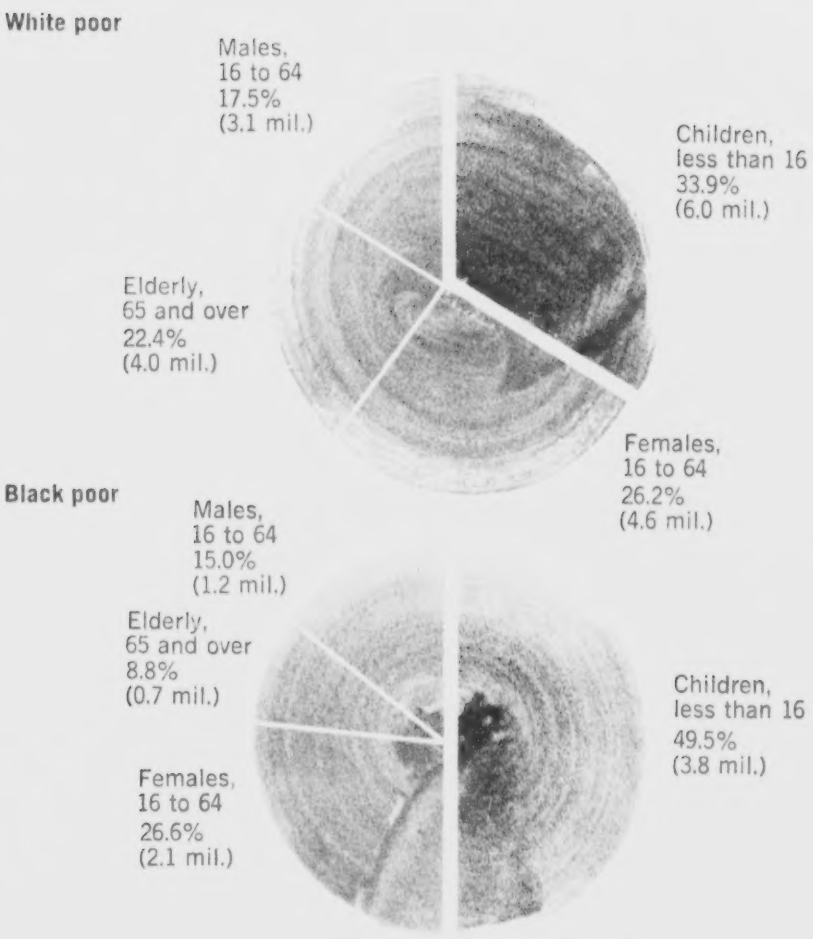

White poor
Males,
16 to 64
17.5%
(3.1 mil.)
Children,
less than 16
33.9%
(6.0 mil.)
Elderly,
65 and over
22.4%
(4.0 mil.)
Females,
16 to 64
26.2%
(4.6 mil.)
Black poor
Males,
16 to 64
15.0%
(1.2 mil.)
Elderly,
65 and over
8.8%
(0.7 mil.)
Children,
less than 16
49.5%
(3.8 mil.)
Females,
16 to 64
26.6%
(2.1 mil.)

Chart 4.

The poor by family status 1970

The family structure of the poor contrasts sharply to that of the nonpoor. In 1970

- 2 out of 10 poor persons were unrelated individuals and nearly 3 out of 10 lived in a family headed by a woman.
- only slightly more than 1 in 10 of the nonpoor were unrelated individuals and members of female headed families.

TABLE 4

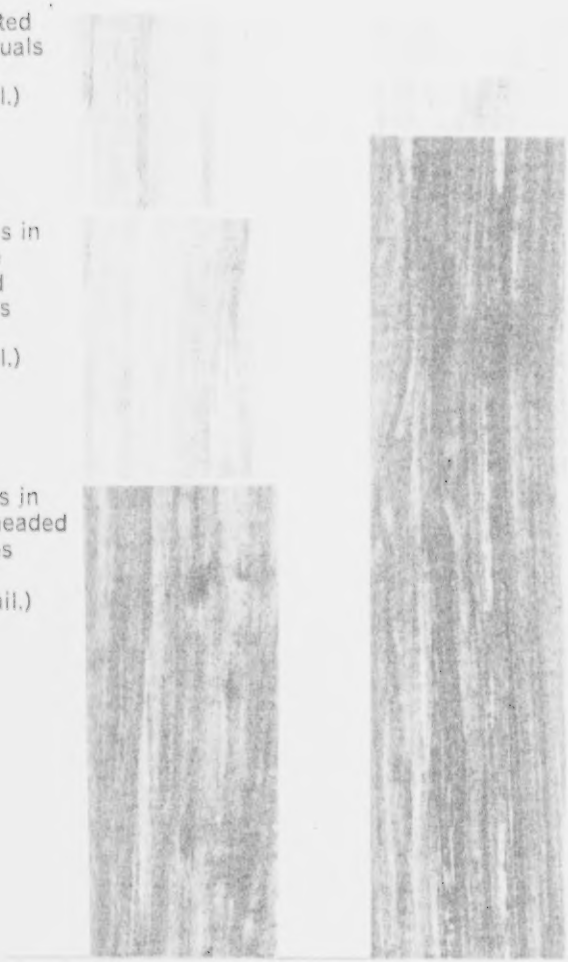
	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	25,886	100.0	176,968	100.0
Unrelated individuals	5,388	20.8	10,333	5.8
In families	20,499	79.2	166,633	94.2
Male headed families	12,879	49.8	154,456	87.3
Female headed families	7,620	29.4	12,177	6.9

Poor persons

Unrelated individuals 20.8% (5.4 mil.)

Persons in female headed families 29.4% (7.6 mil.)

Persons in male headed families 49.8% (12.9 mil.)



Nonpoor persons

Unrelated individuals 5.8% (10.3 mil.)

female headed families 6.9% (12.2 mil.)

male headed families 87.3% (154.5 mil.)

Chart 5.

Poor unrelated individuals by age and sex 1970

Of the 5.4 million unrelated individuals who were poor in 1970,

- 1 out of every 2 was elderly
- and 2 out of 5 were elderly women.

TABLE 5.

	Total	
	Number (000)	Percent
Total	5,388	100.0
Children, less than 16	406	7.5
Males, 16 to 64	856	15.9
Females, 16 to 64	1,391	25.8
Males, 65 and over	549	10.2
Females, 65 and over	2,186	40.6

Poor unrelated individuals

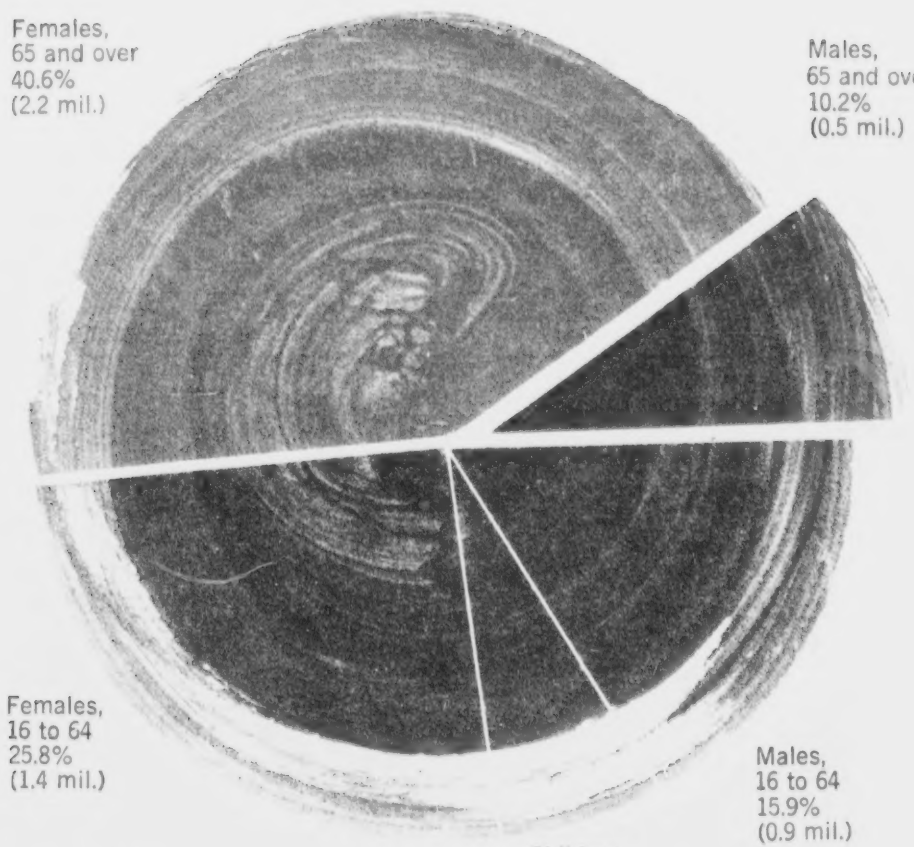


Chart 6.

Poor and nonpoor family heads, age 14 and over, by sex 1970

The remaining 20.5 million poor persons lived in 5.2 million families. A significantly larger proportion of poor families are headed by females compared to nonpoor families. This is especially true among poor black families. In 1970

- 37 percent of all poor families and 57 percent of all poor black families were headed by females. Only 9 percent of all nonpoor families were headed by females.

TABLE 6.

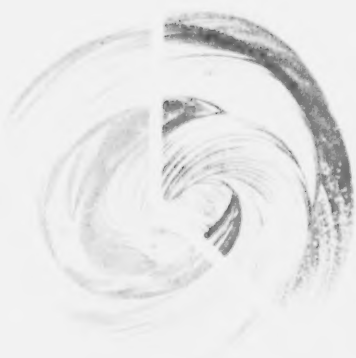
	Poor family heads Total		Poor black family heads		Nonpoor family heads	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	5,214	100.0	1,445	100.0	46,739	100.0
Male	3,280	62.9	625	43.3	42,723	91.4
Female	1,934	37.1	820	56.7	4,016	8.6

Nonpoor family heads

Female
8.6%
(4.0 mil.)

Male
91.4%
(42.7 mil.)

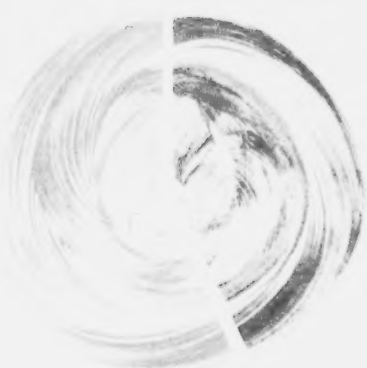
Poor family heads



Female
37.1%
(1.9 mil.)

Male
62.9%
(3.3 mil.)

Poor black family heads



Male
43.3%
(0.6 mil.)

Female
56.7%
(0.8 mil.)

Chart 7.

The poor by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas 1970

The poor are concentrated in nonmetropolitan areas and in the central cities of metropolitan areas. In 1970

- nearly 5 of every 10 poor persons lived in nonmetropolitan areas and
- slightly more than 3 of every 10 lived in the central cities of metropolitan areas.

TABLE 7.

	Total	
	Number (000)	Percent
Total	25,522	100.0
Metropolitan areas	13,378	52.4
Central Cities	8,165	32.0
Suburbs	5,213	20.4
Nonmetropolitan areas	12,142	47.6

Poor persons

Metropolitan areas

Central cities
32.0%
(8.2 mil.)

Suburbs
20.4%
(5.2 mil.)

Nonmetropolitan areas
47.6%
(12.1 mil.)

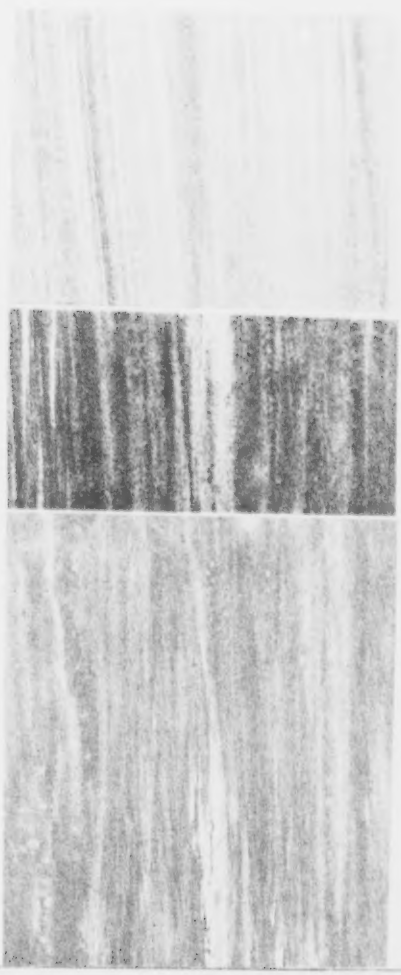


Chart 8.

The geographic Location of The poor 1970

The poor are located throughout the United States. However, the largest concentration can be found in the South. In 1970

- approximately 45 percent of all the poor lived in the South and
- nearly 20 percent of all persons in the South were poor.

TABLE 8.

	Number (000)	Percent	Percent poor in region
Total	25,522	100.0	12.6
Northeast	4,218	16.5	8.7
North Central	5,866	23.0	10.3
South	11,480	45.0	18.5
West	3,955	15.5	11.3

West
4.0 million persons were poor
accounting for
15.5 percent of all the poor
in the Nation and
11.3 percent of all persons
in this region

Northeast
4.2 million persons were poor
accounting for
16.5 percent of all the poor
in the Nation and
8.7 percent of all persons
in this region

North Central
5.9 million persons were poor
accounting for
23.0 percent of all the poor
in the Nation and
10.3 percent of all persons
in this region

South
11.5 million persons were poor
accounting for
45.0 percent of all the poor
in the Nation and
18.5 percent of all persons
in this region

Chart 9.

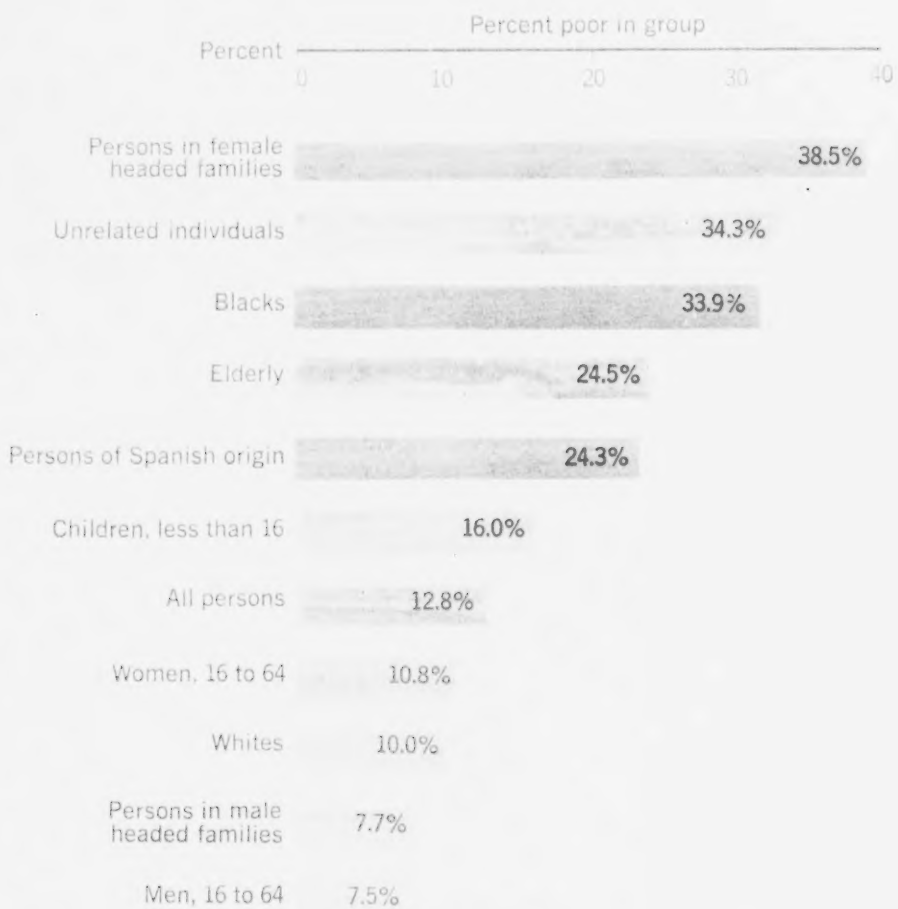
The incidence of poverty by selected groups 1970

Although the poor have been identified, it is also important to know what groups in the Nation's population have the greatest incidence of poverty. Among some of the groups which compose the poverty population in 1970

- 39 percent of all persons in female headed families were poor
- 34 percent of all unrelated individuals were poor
- 34 percent of all blacks were poor
- 25 percent of all elderly persons were poor
- and 24 percent of all persons of Spanish origin were poor.

TABLE 9.

	Total in population (000)	Total poor (000)	Percent poor
Persons in female headed families	19,797	7,620	38.5
Unrelated individuals	15,721	5,388	34.3
Blacks	22,810	7,737	33.9
Elderly	19,254	4,709	24.5
Persons of Spanish origin	8,956	2,177	24.3
Children, less than 16	62,696	10,033	16.0
All persons	202,854	25,886	12.8
Women, 16 to 64	62,576	6,789	10.8
Whites	177,626	17,748	10.0
Persons in male headed families	167,335	12,879	7.7
Men, 16 to 64	58,331	4,355	7.5


Percent poor in group
Percent
0
10
20
30
40
Persons in female headed families
38.5%
Unrelated individuals
34.3%
Blacks
33.9%
Elderly
24.5%
Persons of Spanish origin
24.3%
Children, less than 16
16.0%
All persons
12.8%
Women, 16 to 64
10.8%
Whites
10.0%
Persons in male headed families
7.7%
Men, 16 to 64
7.5%

Some selected characteristics
of the poor

The many factors which account for persons being poor are often interrelated. Large families; low skill and educational levels; the lack of full-time, year round work; and poor health, for example, all affect the socio-economic situation of poor persons, to varying degrees. It is understandable, therefore, why so many poor families become dependent on welfare and other forms of outside economic help.

The next few charts contrast some of these characteristics and those of the nonpoor population.

Chart 10.

The average family size of poor and nonpoor families 1970

Poor families are somewhat larger than nonpoor families, and this is especially true for black families that are poor. In 1970

- the average size of all poor families was 3.9 persons and of poor black families, 4.7 persons. The average size of nonpoor families was only 3.6 persons.
- poor families, on average, had nearly two children under 16 compared to only about 1 child under 16 in nonpoor families.

TABLE 10.

	Poor (000)	Poor blacks (000)	Poor whites (000)	Nonpoor (000)
Persons in families	20,499	6,805	13,363	166,633
Persons in families, less than 16	9,627	3,729	5,722	52,662
Families	5,214	1,445	3,701	46,739
Persons/family	3.9	4.7	3.6	3.6
Persons, less than 16/family	1.8	2.6	1.5	1.1

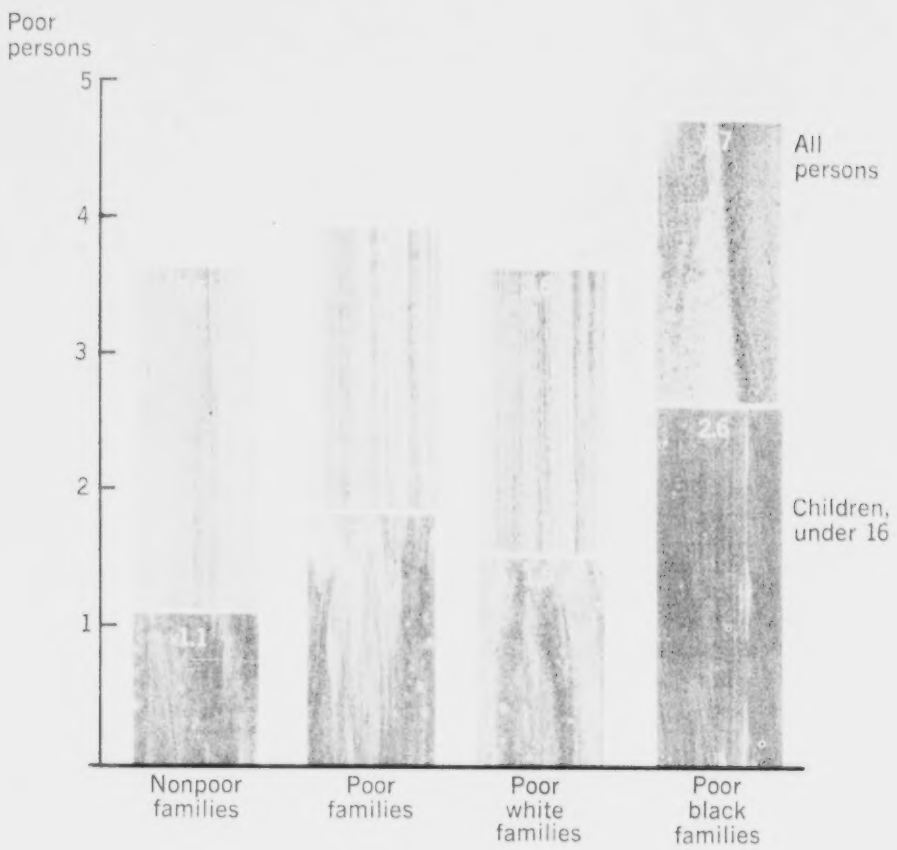

Poor persons
5
4
3
2
1
All persons
Children, under 16
Nonpoor families
Poor families
Poor white families
Poor black families

Chart 11.

Years of school completed for the poor and nonpoor, age 22 and over 1970

The educational level of the adult poor is low relative to the nonpoor population. In 1970

- 1 of every 2 poor persons, age 22 and over, had completed 8 years or less of school compared to only 1 of every 5 among the nonpoor.
- only about 3 of every 10 poor persons had completed 12 or more years of schooling compared to somewhat more than 6 of every 10 of the nonpoor.

TABLE 11.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	13,273	100.0	105,610	100.0
No school	509	3.8	734	0.7
1 to 8 years	6,401	48.2	21,252	20.1
9 to 11 years	2,492	18.8	17,185	16.3
12 years	2,504	18.9	39,651	37.5
College, 1 year or more	1,367	10.3	26,788	25.4

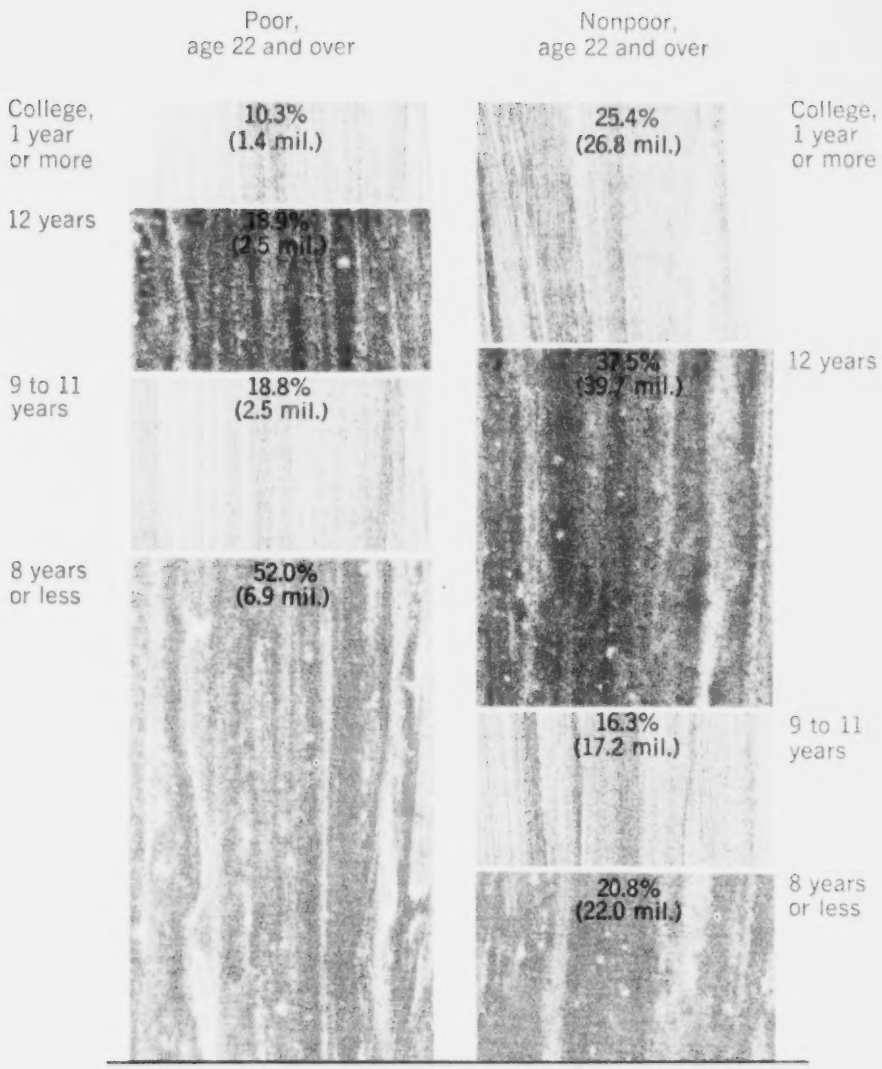

Poor,
age 22 and over
Nonpoor,
age 22 and over
College,
1 year
or more
10.3%
(1.4 mil.)
25.4%
(26.8 mil.)
College,
1 year
or more
12 years
18.9%
(2.5 mil.)
37.5%
(39.7 mil.)
12 years
9 to 11
years
18.8%
(2.5 mil.)
16.3%
(17.2 mil.)
9 to 11
years
8 years
or less
52.0%
(6.9 mil.)
20.8%
(22.0 mil.)
8 years
or less

Chart 12.

The poor and nonpoor's attachment to the work force* 1970

Although a larger proportion of the nonpoor work compared to the poor, the greater concentration among the poor of children, elderly, ill and disabled, and persons (14 to 64 years of age) who are in school accounts for much of the difference. Only a very small proportion of the poor who could be working are not working. In 1970

- children, the elderly, ill and disabled, and those in school (age 14 to 64) accounted for 64 percent of the total poor but 40 percent of the nonpoor.
- those poor persons who possibly could be working, but are not (those age 14 to 64 who did not work, go to school, or were ill or disabled) accounted for 12 percent of the poverty population, *and* the vast majority were women with household responsibilities.

TABLE 12.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	**25,886**	**100.0**	**176,968**	**100.0**
Children, less than 14	8,905	34.4	45,707	25.8
Elderly, 65 and over	4,709	18.2	14,545	8.2
Ill and disabled, 14 to 64	1,208	4.7	1,941	1.1
In school, 14 to 64	1,698	6.6	9,337	5.3
Do not work, go to school, or were not ill or disabled, age 14 to 64	3,177	12.3	19,057	10.8
Males	356	1.4	1,076	0.6
Females	2,821	10.9	17,980	10.2
Worked, age 14 to 64 *	6,190	23.9	86,378	48.8

* Includes those in the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post.

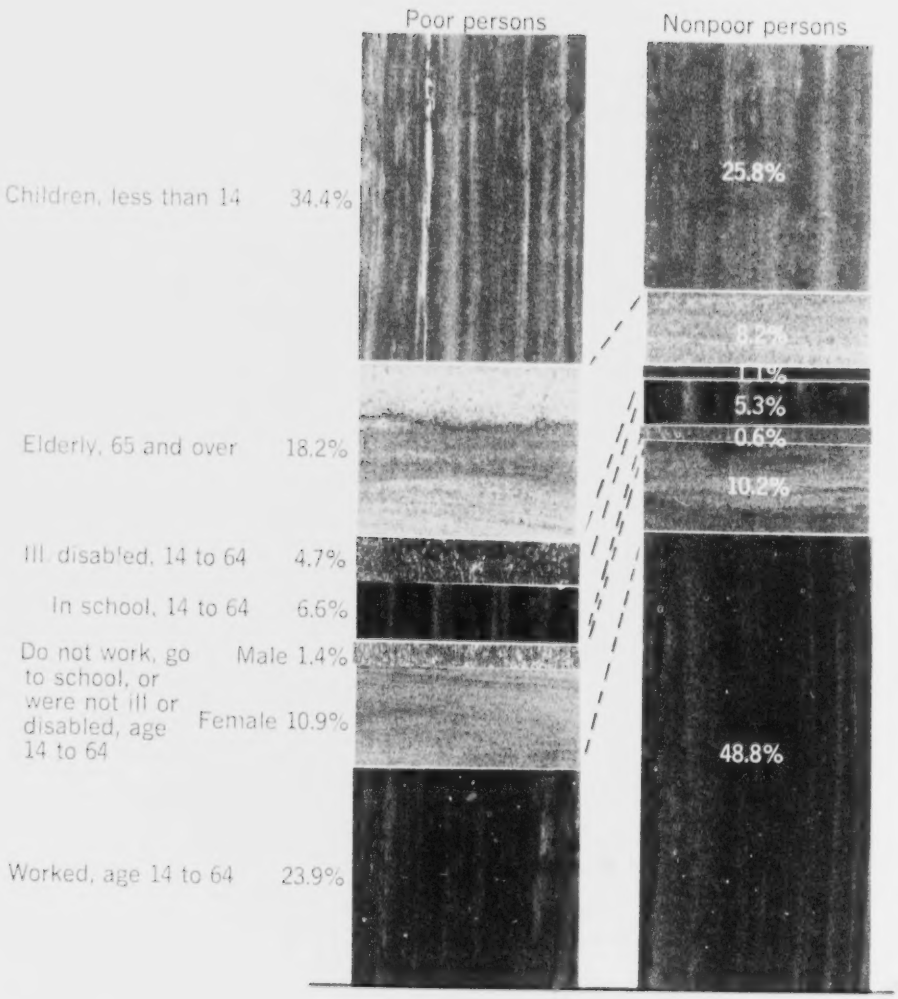

Poor persons
Nonpoor persons
Children, less than 14
34.4%
25.8%
8.2%
1.1%
5.3%
0.6%
Elderly, 65 and over
18.2%
10.2%
Ill, disabled, 14 to 64
4.7%
In school, 14 to 64
6.6%
Do not work, go to school, or were not ill or disabled, age 14 to 64
Male 1.4%
Female 10.9%
48.8%
Worked, age 14 to 64
23.9%

Chart 13.

The Full-time, part-time status of the poor and nonpoor, who worked, age 14 and over 1970

Of the poor, age 14 and over who worked, the majority were employed in jobs providing less than year round, full-time employment. In 1970

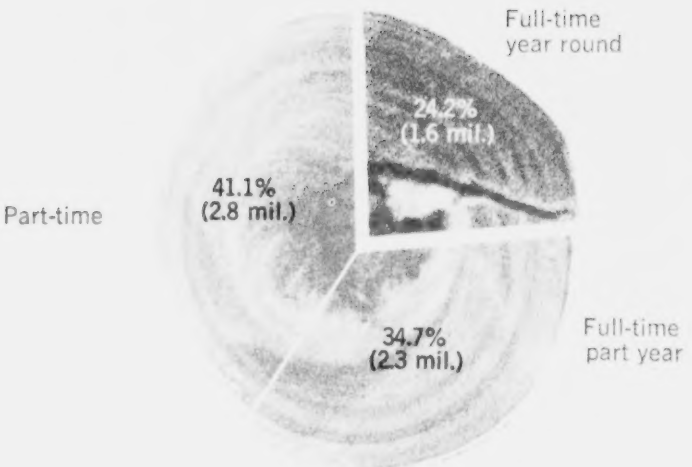
- 3 out of 4 poor people who worked, did so in either part-time jobs or full-time jobs for less than a full year.
- only 1 of every 4 of the working poor worked 35 hours a week or more for 50 to 52 weeks, but still remained poor.

TABLE 13

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total worked *	6,716	100.0	89,231	100.0
Full-time, year round	1,624	24.2	50,373	56.5
Full-time, part year	2,333	34.7	20,243	22.7
Part-time	2,759	41.1	18,614	20.9

* Excludes those in the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post.

Working poor



Working nonpoor

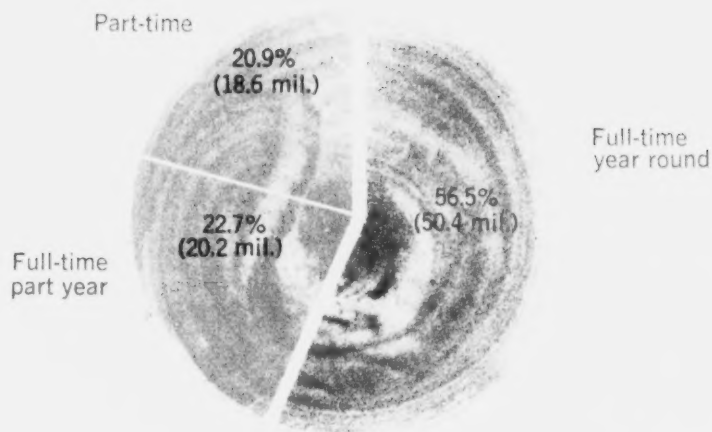


Chart 14.

Occupation of longest job for the poor and nonpoor, who worked, age 14 and over 1970

Among the poor persons that work only a small proportion worked in high skilled occupations. In 1970

- only 2 of every 10 worked in a white-collar or skilled occupation compared to slightly more than 5 out of every 10 nonpoor persons.

TABLE 14

	Poor (000)	Percent	Nonpoor (000)	Percent
Total worked *	6,716	100.0	89,321	100.0
White-collar and skilled wage and salary	1,437	21.3	48,411	54.3
Semi-skilled wage and salary	871	13.0	14,278	16.0
Unskilled wage and salary	599	8.9	4,829	5.4
Farm wage and salary	571	8.5	1,292	1.4
Service wage and salary	1,701	25.3	12,171	13.6
Self-employed (farm and other)	1,091	16.2	6,641	7.4
Unpaid family workers	444	6.6	1,612	1.8

* Excludes those in the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post.

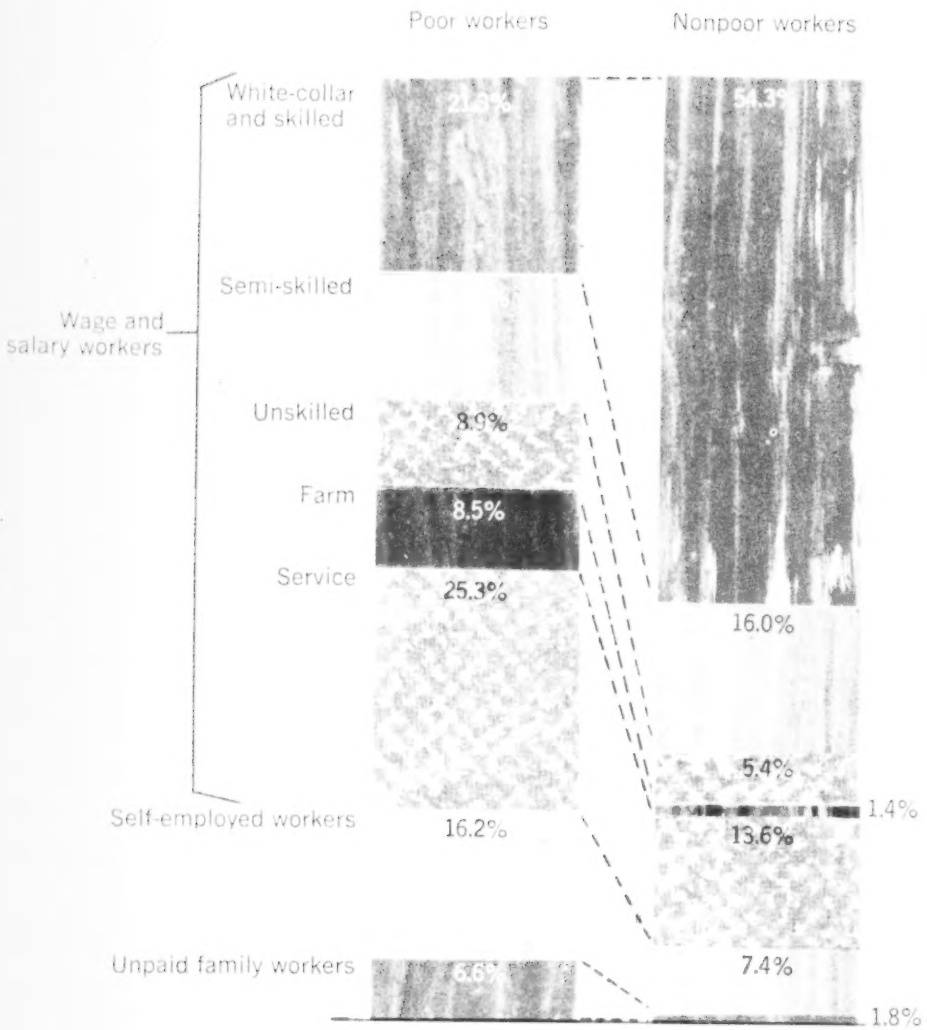

Poor workers
Nonpoor workers
White-collar and skilled
Semi-skilled
Wage and salary workers
Unskilled
8.9%
Farm
8.5%
Service
25.3%
16.0%
5.4%
1.4%
Self-employed workers
16.2%
13.6%
Unpaid family workers
7.4%
1.8%

Chart 15.

Sources of aggregate family income reported by poor and nonpoor families 1969

Due to many of the factors just discussed, the earning power of poor families is limited. This is reflected by the types of incomes which poor families receive. In 1969

- only 50 percent of the poor families' reported aggregate income was derived from earnings, compared to 90 percent for the nonpoor.
- income from Social Security, railroad retirement and public assistance accounted for nearly 40 percent of the aggregate income of all poor families.

TABLE 15.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Dollars (millions)	Percent	Dollars (millions)	Percent
Total income	$10,636	100.0	$531,298	100.0
Earnings	5,488	51.6	477,637	89.9
Income other than earnings	5,148	48.4	53,661	10.1
Social security, government railroad retirement	2,074	19.5	14,345	2.7
Public assistance	2,010	18.9	1,594	0.3
All other income	1,064	10.0	37,722	7.1

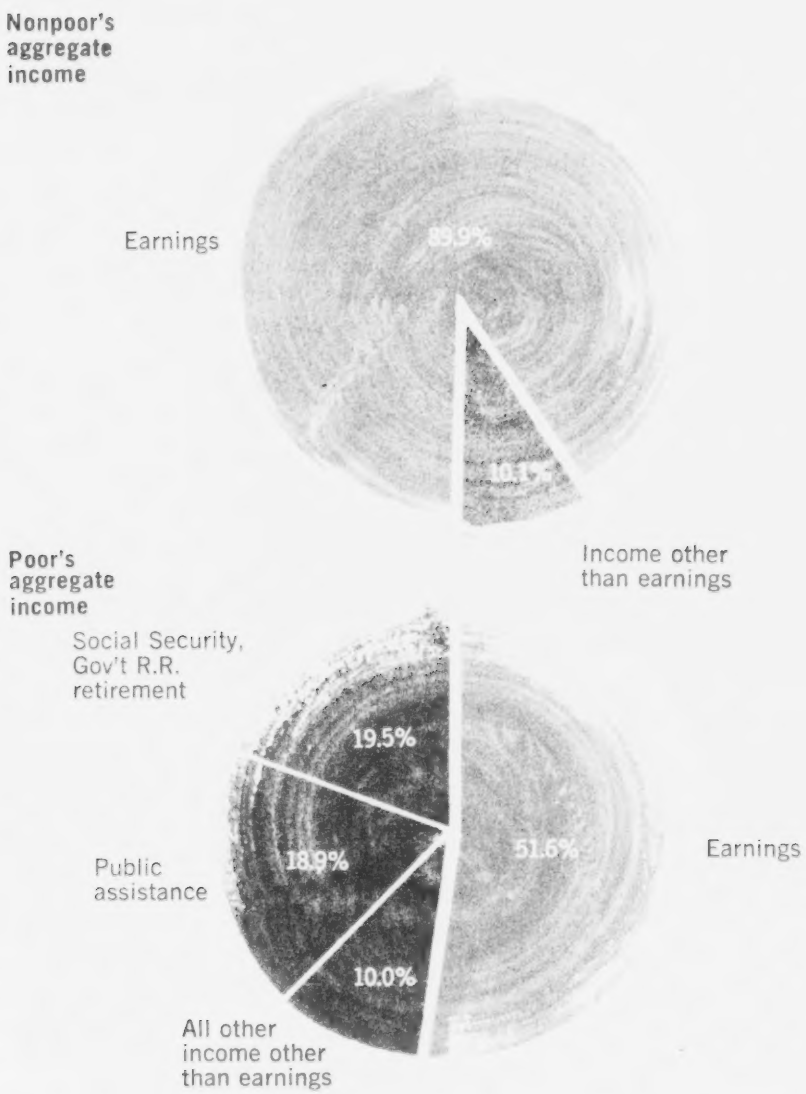

Nonpoor's aggregate income
Earnings
89.9%
Income other than earnings
Poor's aggregate income
Social Security, Gov't R.R. retirement
19.5%
Public assistance
18.9%
51.6%
Earnings
10.0%
All other income other than earnings

Chart 16.

Income deficits of poor families 1970

CHART 16.
INCOME DEFICITS *
OF POOR FAMILIES—
1970

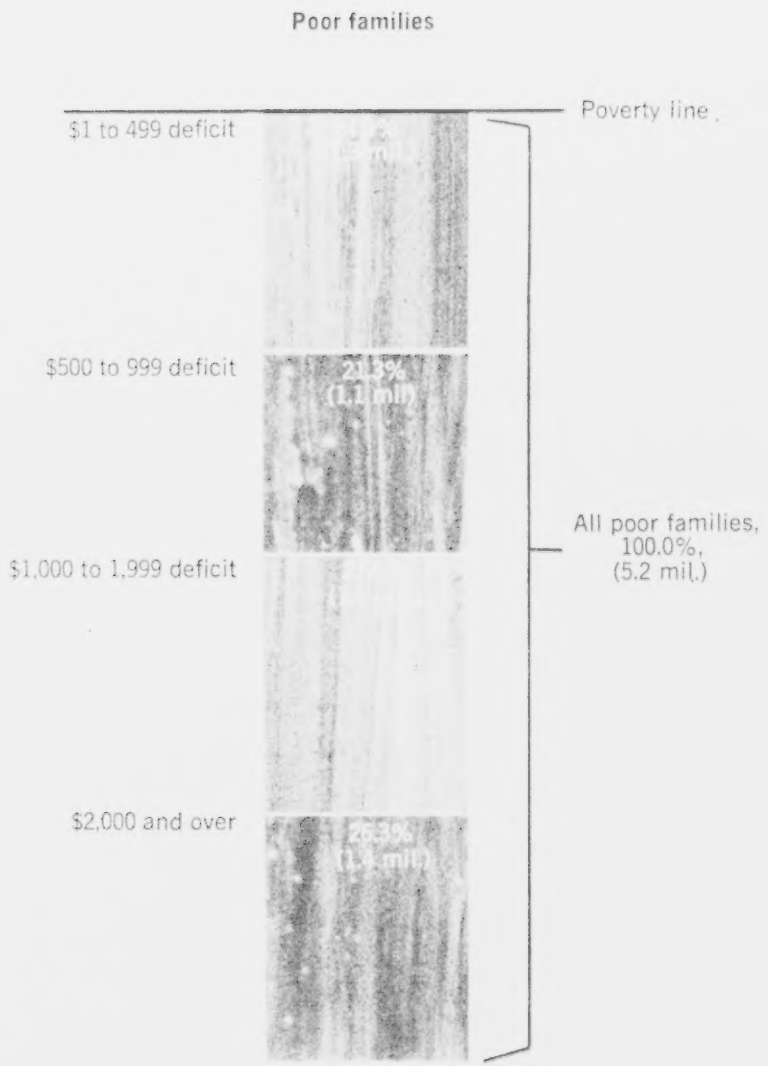
Not all poor families are poor to the same degree. Some families would require only a small increase in income to move out of poverty, but others would require substantial amounts. In 1970

- one quarter of all poor families would have needed from only $1 to $499 to escape poverty, but
- another quarter would have needed $2,000 or more.

TABLE 16.

	Poor	
	Number (000)	Percent
Total	5,214	100.0
$1 to 499 deficit	1,298	24.9
$500 to 999 deficit	1,111	21.3
$1,000 to 1,999 deficit	1,434	27.5
$2,000 and over	1,371	26.3

* Income deficits represent the differences between the total incomes of families who are poor and their respective poverty lines.


Poor families
Poverty line
$1 to 499 deficit
$500 to 999 deficit
21.1%
(1.1 mil.)
$1,000 to 1,999 deficit
$2,000 and over
26.3%
(1.4 mil.)
All poor families,
100.0%,
(5.2 mil.)

Frequently mentioned poverty groups

Among the poor in our Nation there are some groups which are frequently mentioned when the topic of poverty arises. These groups of persons--the elderly poor, the working poor, poor children, and poor female family heads--are poor for somewhat different reasons.

The elderly poor are isolated from the rest of society because of their age, weak family ties, and lack of earning power.

The working poor, on the other hand, lack the necessary skills, educational background and/or opportunity to provide them with economic self sufficiency.

For poor children their poverty is usually the direct result of the problems which confront the head of their family.

Poor female family heads, while having to provide sole support of their families in most cases, are often constrained from doing so because of their low skill levels and the pressence of small children in their families.

The next series of charts depicts some of the more salient characteristics of each of these groups.

Chart 17.

The elderly poor and nonpoor by family status 1970

Social isolation among the elderly poor (65 years and over) is a major problem because so many of them are individuals, who live alone or with nonrelatives. In 1970

- nearly 6 of every 10 elderly poor persons were unrelated individuals. Only 2 of every 10 elderly nonpoor persons were unrelated individuals.

TABLE 17.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	4,709	100.0	14,545	100.0
Family heads	1,166	24.8	6,009	41.3
Spouses and other family members	809	17.2	5,462	37.6
Unrelated individuals	2,735	58.1	3,073	21.1

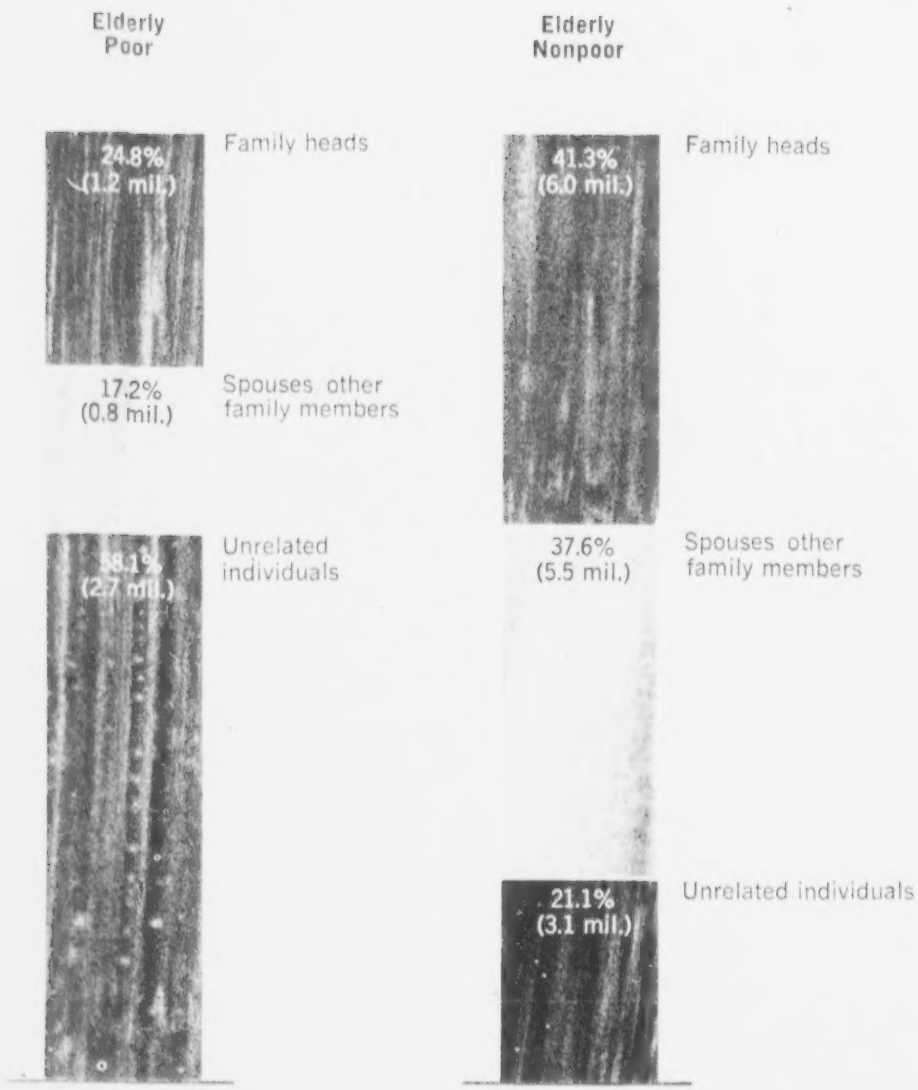

Elderly Poor
24.8% (1.2 mil.)
Family heads
17.2% (0.8 mil.)
Spouses, other family members
58.1% (2.7 mil.)
Unrelated individuals
Elderly Nonpoor
41.3% (6.0 mil.)
Family heads
37.6% (5.5 mil.)
Spouses, other family members
21.1% (3.1 mil.)
Unrelated individuals

Chart 18.

The working poor and nonpoor age 14 to 64, by family status 1970

As was shown earlier, nearly all of the poor who could work do work. While it might be thought that most of the working poor are male heads of families and wives, as is true among the nonpoor, in 1970

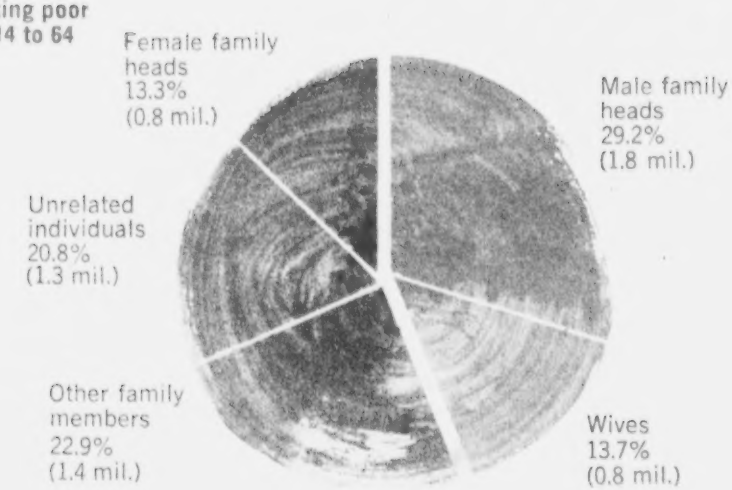
- only slightly more than 4 out of 10 of the working poor were male family heads and wives compared to nearly 7 out of 10 among the nonpoor.
- the remainder were female family heads, unrelated individuals, and other family members (mainly youths who are neither family heads nor wives).

Table 18.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	6,119	100.0	85,285	100.0
Male family heads	1,789	29.2	35,636	41.8
Female family heads	811	13.3	2,618	3.1
Wives	838	13.7	21,335	25.0
Other family members	1,404	22.9	19,012	22.3
Unrelated individuals	1,275	20.8	6,686	7.8

* Excludes those in the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post.

Working poor age 14 to 64



Working nonpoor age 14 to 64

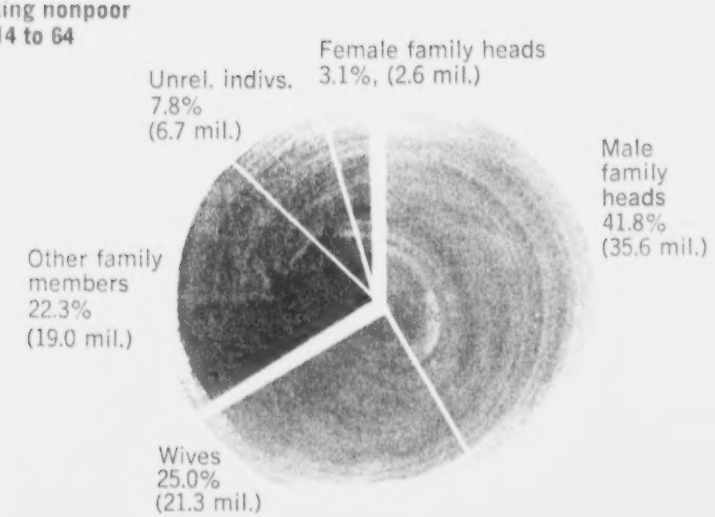


Chart 19.

Poor and nonpoor children, less than 16, by sex and color of family head 1970

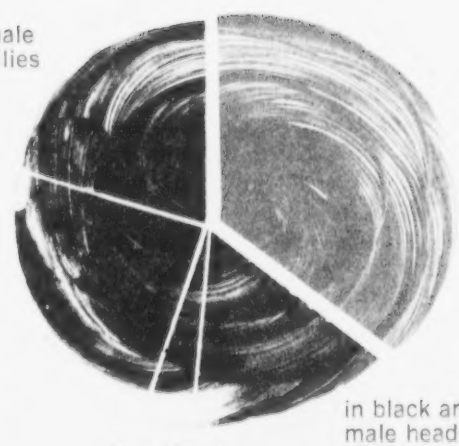
The vast majority of nonpoor children are members of white male headed families, but this is not the case for poor children. In 1970

- only 3½ of every 10 poor children lived in white male headed families.
- nearly 4 out of 10 of all poor children lived in black or other nonwhite families.

Table 19.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	10,033	100.0	52,663	100.0
In male headed families	5,187	51.7	49,118	93.3
White	3,621	36.1	44,276	84.1
Black & other nonwhites	1,566	15.6	4,842	9.2
In female headed families	4,440	44.3	3,544	6.7
White	2,101	20.9	2,474	4.7
Black & other nonwhites	2,339	23.3	1,070	2.0
Unrelated individuals	406	4.0	.....	.....

Poor Children


in white female headed families 20.9% (2.1 mil.)
in white male headed families 36.1% (3.6 mil.)
in black and other nonwhite female headed families 23.3% (2.3 mil.)
in black and other male headed families 15.6% (1.6 mil.)
Unrelated individuals 4.0% (0.4 mil.)

Nonpoor Children

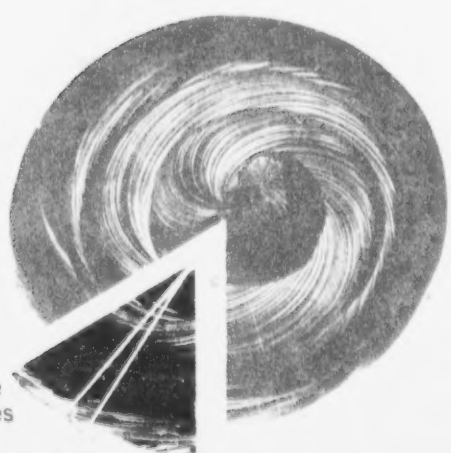

in white male headed families 84.1% (44.3 mil.)
in white female headed families 4.7% (2.5 mil.)
in black and other nonwhite female headed families 2.0% (1.1 mil.)
in black and other nonwhite male headed families 9.2% (4.8 mil.)

Chart 20.

Persons in poor and nonpoor female headed families by age 1970

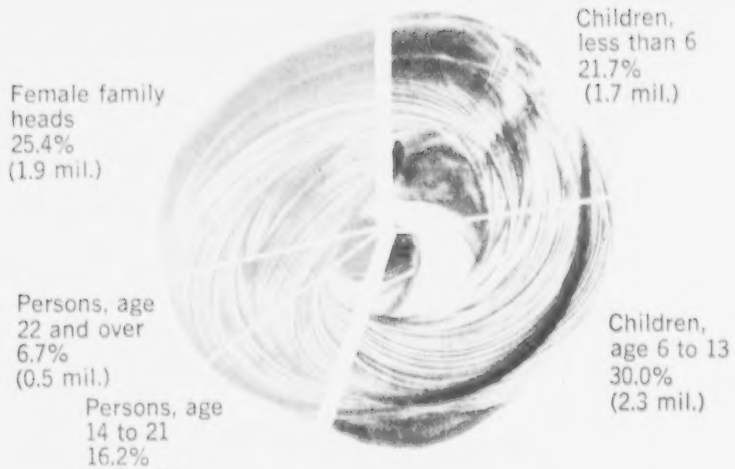
The large proportion of children—especially preschool age children—in poor families headed by females undoubtedly deters many poor female heads of families from working. In 1970

- 22 percent of all persons in poor female headed families were children less than 6 years of age and about 30 percent were children of ages 6 to 13.
- in contrast, only about 8 percent of all persons in nonpoor female headed families were children less than 6, and only 16 percent were children 6 to 13 years of age.

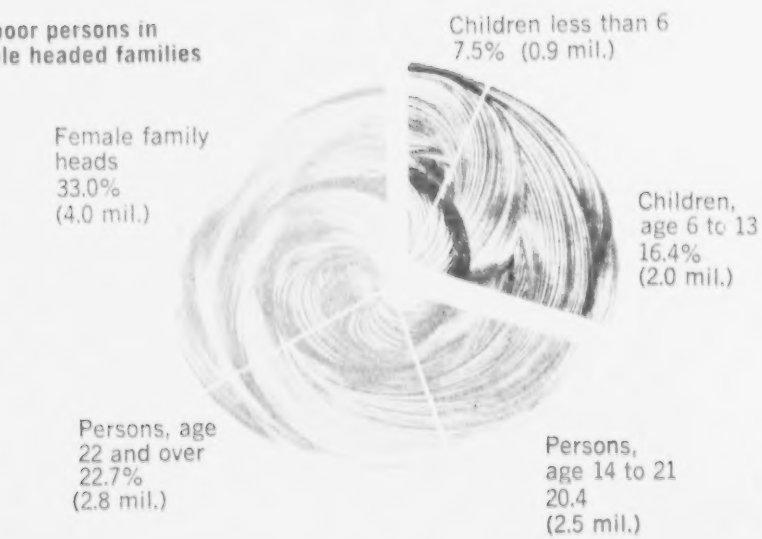
Table 20.

	Poor		Nonpoor	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	7,620	100.0	12,177	100.0
Children, less than 6	1,653	21.7	918	7.5
Children, age 6 to 13	2,287	30.0	2,001	16.4
Persons, age 14 to 21	1,238	16.2	2,479	20.4
Persons, age 22 and over	508	6.7	2,763	22.7
Female family heads	1,934	25.4	4,016	33.0

Poor persons in female headed families


Children, less than 6 21.7% (1.7 mil.)
Female family heads 25.4% (1.9 mil.)
Persons, age 22 and over 6.7% (0.5 mil.)
Persons, age 14 to 21 16.2% (1.2 mil.)
Children, age 6 to 13 30.0% (2.3 mil.)

Nonpoor persons in female headed families


Children less than 6 7.5% (0.9 mil.)
Female family heads 33.0% (4.0 mil.)
Children, age 6 to 13 16.4% (2.0 mil.)
Persons, age 22 and over 22.7% (2.8 mil.)
Persons, age 14 to 21 20.4 (2.5 mil.)

The increase in the poverty population between 1969 and 1970

The number of poor persons in our Nation rose slightly in 1970, after declining steadily throughout most of the 1960's. The slump in economic activity, together with the continuing rise in the cost of living, were the probable causes of this increase.

The net increase in the poverty population amounted to about 1.2 million persons. Although we do not have statistics on the number of persons who exited from or entered poverty in 1970, it is possible to make some generalizations about which groups among the poor accounted for the net increase.

These charts, therefore, will reflect not only the increase in poverty in 1970, but also the groups who were affected.

Chart 21.

The Number of Poor Persons 1969 and 1970

The number of poor persons in this country, after falling steadily throughout the sixties, rose by 1.2 million persons between 1969 and 1970. About 87 percent of this increase occurred among persons living in families.

Table 21.

	1970 (000)	1969 (000)	Change (000)
Total	25,886	24,656	1,230
Persons in families	20,499	19,429	1,070
Unrelated individuals	5,388	5,226	162

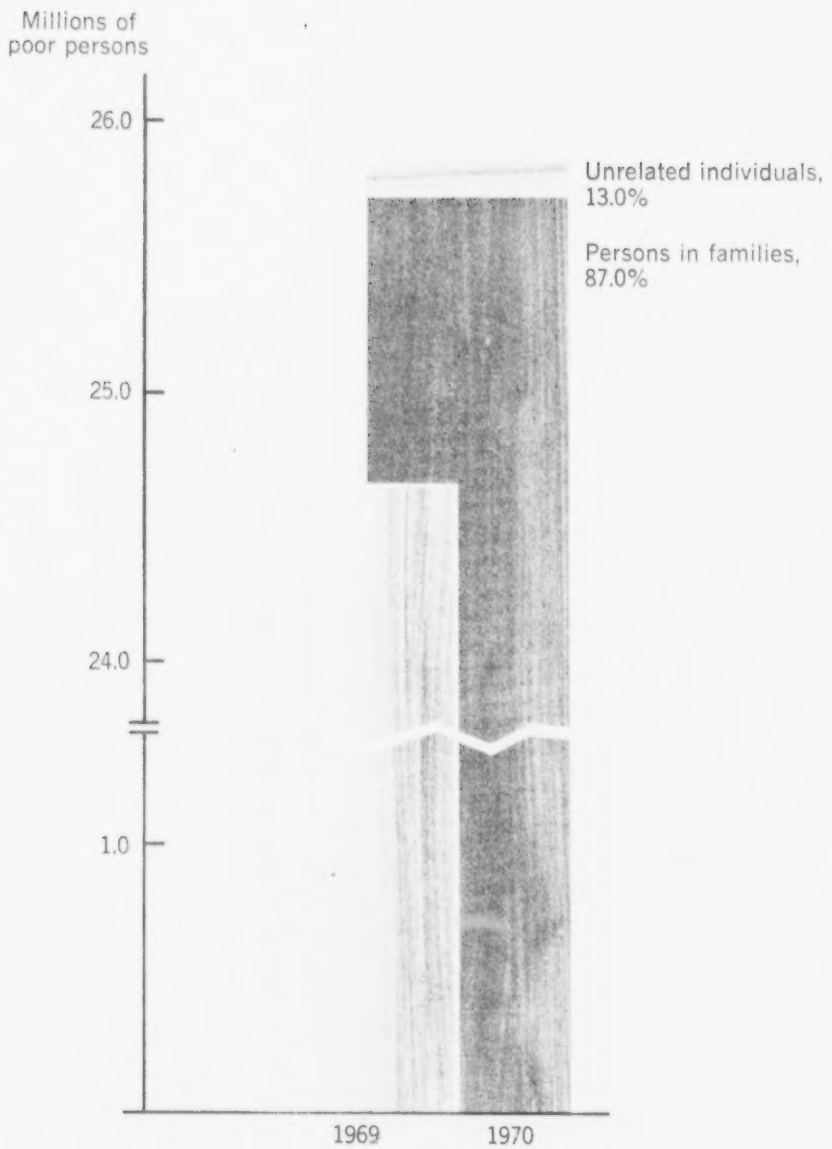

Millions of poor persons
26.0
25.0
24.0
1.0
Unrelated individuals, 13.0%
Persons in families, 87.0%
1969
1970

Chart 22.

The number of poor persons living in families by color and sex of family head 1969 and 1970

Persons living in families headed by black and other nonwhite females experienced the greatest increase in poverty relative to their size in the poverty population. Between 1969 and 1970

- poor persons living in families headed by black and other nonwhite females increased by 450,000.

Table 22.

	1970 (000)	1969 (000)	Change (000)
Total	20,499	19,429	1,070
Persons in families where head is:			
Male, white	9,593	9,106	487
Female, white	3,771	3,592	179
Male, black and other nonwhite	3,286	3,331	–45
Female, black and other nonwhite	3,849	3,400	449

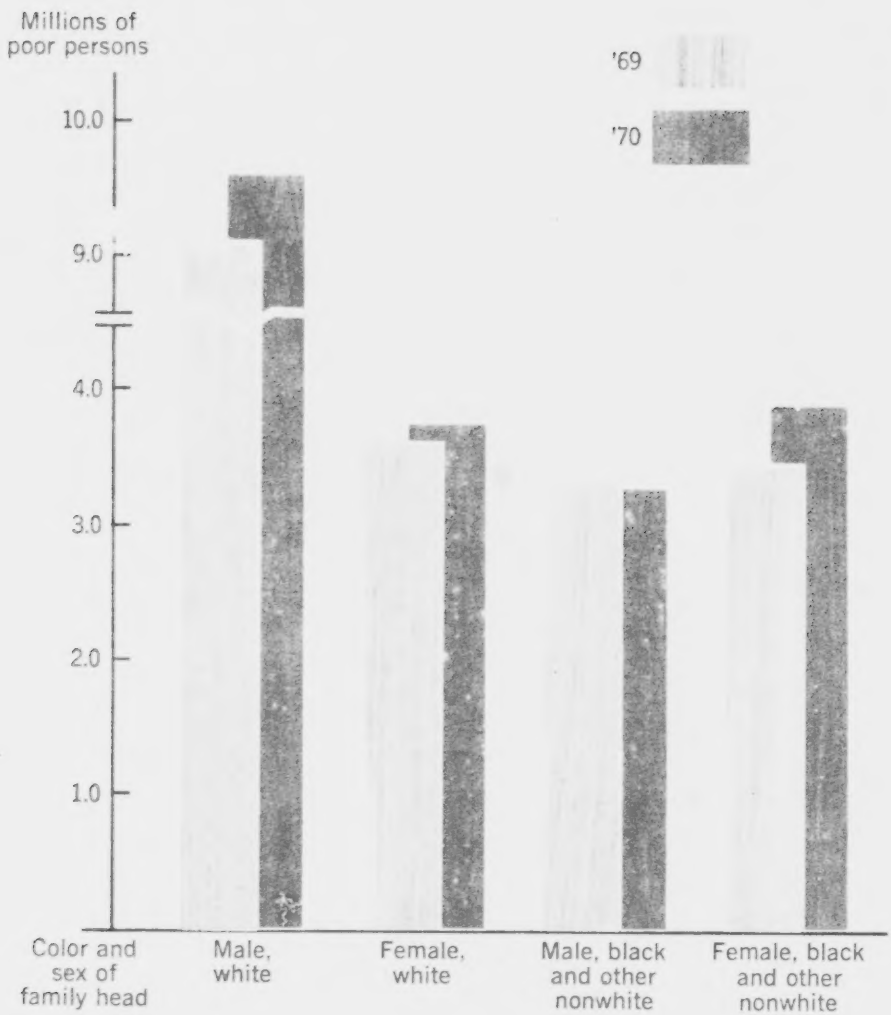

Millions of poor persons
'69
'70
10.0
9.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
Color and sex of family head
Male, white
Female, white
Male, black and other nonwhite
Female, black and other nonwhite

Chart 23.

The number of poor persons living in families by relationship to family head 1969 and 1970

One of the most unfortunate aspects of poverty is the large number of children it affects. This is particularly evident when poverty increases. Between 1969 and 1970

■ poor children, less than 14, accounted for about 550,000 of the 1.1 million increase in poor persons living in families—about 5 of every 10.

TABLE 23.

	1970 (000)	1969 (000)	Change (000)
Total	20,499	19,429	1,070
Persons in families:			
Family heads, 14 to 64	4,048	3,709	339
Family heads, 65 and over	1,166	1,239	-73
Children, under 14	8,540	7,993	547
Other family members, 14 to 64	5,936	5,601	335
Other family members, 65 and over	809	888	-79

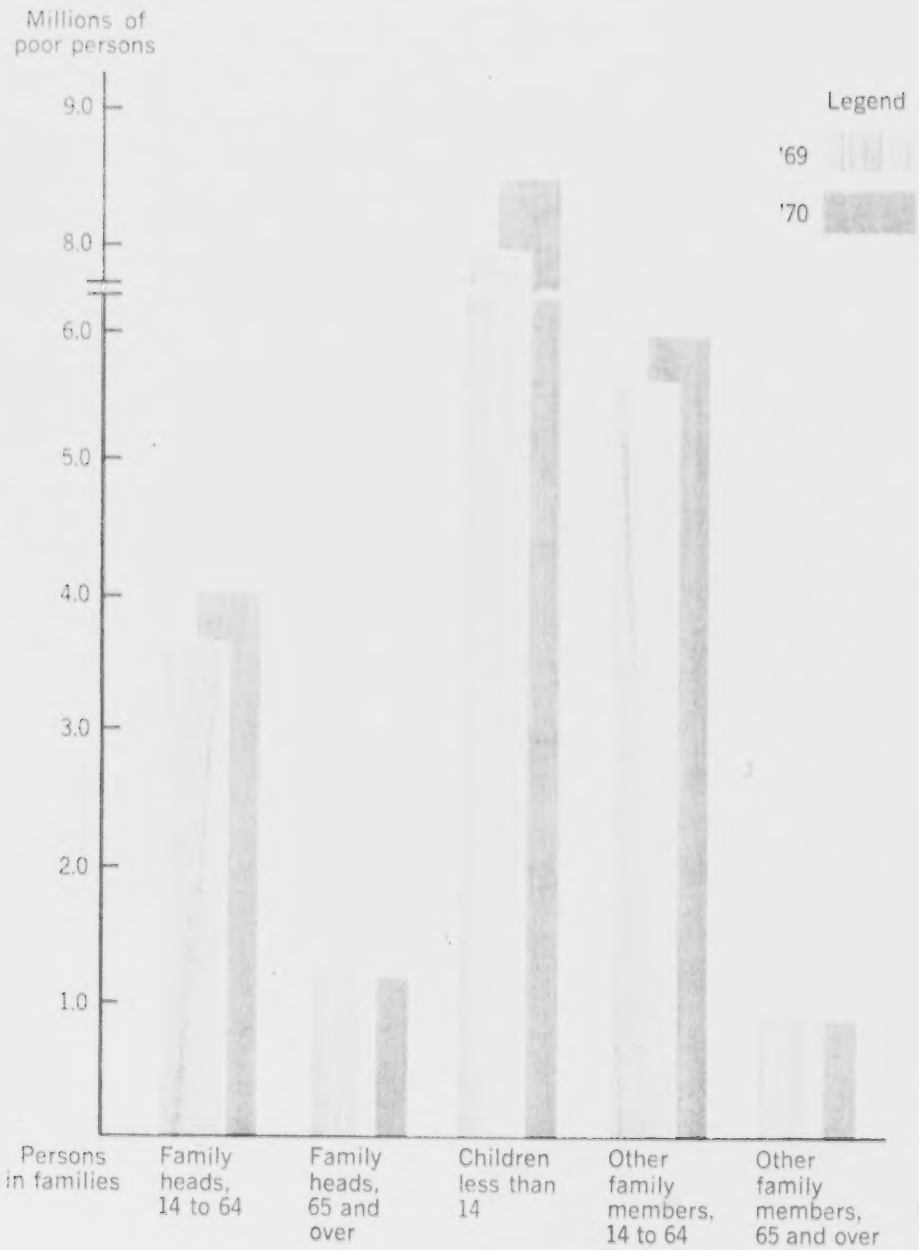

Millions of poor persons
9.0
8.0
6.0
5.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
Legend
'69
'70
Persons in families
Family heads, 14 to 64
Family heads, 65 and over
Children less than 14
Other family members, 14 to 64
Other family members, 65 and over

Chart 24.

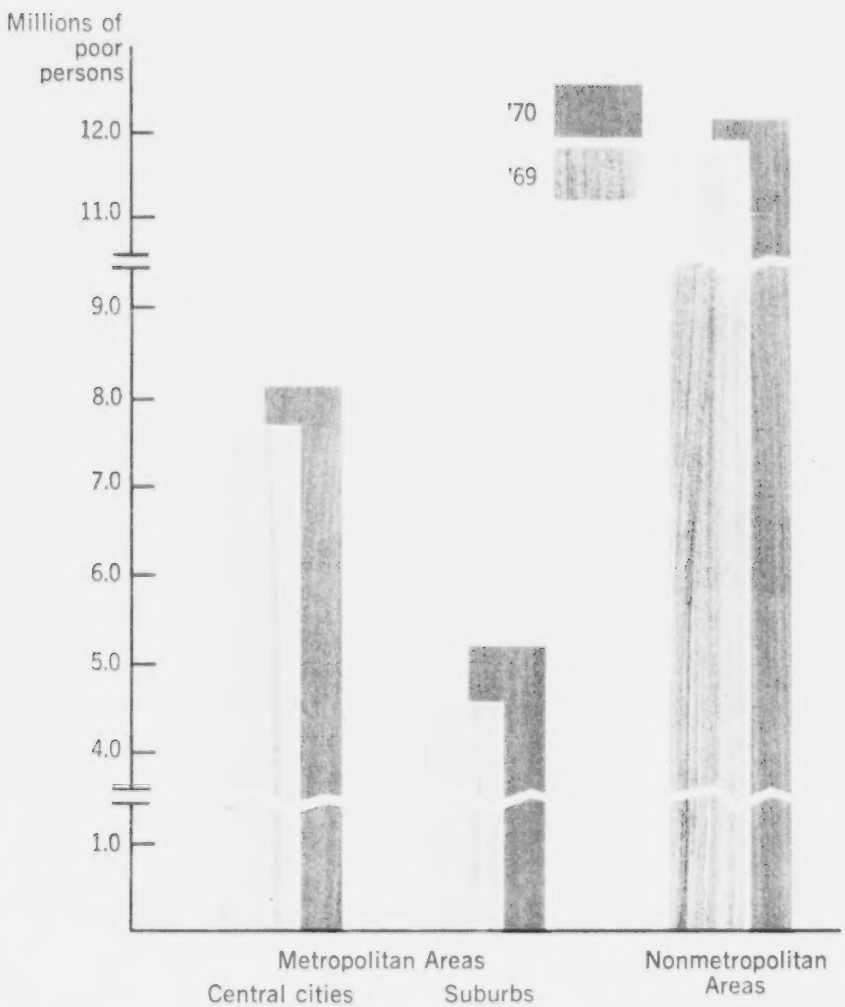
The number of poor persons by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas 1969 and 1970

As was shown earlier, the poor are concentrated in central cities and nonmetropolitan areas. However, between 1969 and 1970

■ about 53 percent of the total increase in the number of poor persons occurred in the suburbs of our metropolitan areas.

TABLE 24.

	1970 (000)	1969 (000)	Change (000)
Total	25,527	24,289	1,231
Metropolitan areas	13,378	12,320	1,058
Central cities	8,165	7,760	405
Suburbs	5,213	4,560	653
Nonmetrooplitan areas	12,142	11,969	173


Millions of poor persons
12.0
11.0
9.0
8.0
7.0
6.0
5.0
4.0
1.0
'70
'69
Metropolitan Areas
Central cities
Suburbs
Nonmetropolitan Areas

Trends in the poverty population over the past decade

Between 1960 and 1970, the poverty population fell from 39.9 million to 25.5 million and the proportion of the Nation's population which was poor from 22.2 to 12.6 percent.

As poverty was reduced over the past 10 years, however, the composition of the poor population changed. In general, it appears that the poverty population in 1970 was composed of a larger proportion of unrelated individuals and families headed by women and a smaller proportion of families headed by men. Furthermore, it appears that the greater ability of male family heads to obtain work relative to female family heads has been responsible for this change.

The next few charts depict some of these changes.

Chart 25.

The number of poor persons 1959 to 1970

Despite the 1969-1970 experience, poverty declined significantly during the past decade. Not only has the number of poor persons been reduced dramatically, but so has the proportion of the Nation's population that is poor.

TABLE 25.

	Number (000)	Percent of total population
1970	25,522[r]	12.6[r]
1969	24,289[r]	12.2[r]
1968	25,389[r]	12.8[r]
1967	27,769[r]	14.2[r]
1966	28,510[r]	14.7[r]
1966	30,424	15.7
1965	33,185	17.3
1964	36,055	19.0
1963	36,436	19.5
1962	38,625	21.0
1961	39,628	21.9
1960	39,851	22.2
1959	39,490	22.4

* Excludes unrelated individuals under 14 years of age.

[r] Based on improved methodology for processing income data. See footnote 2 on page 70.

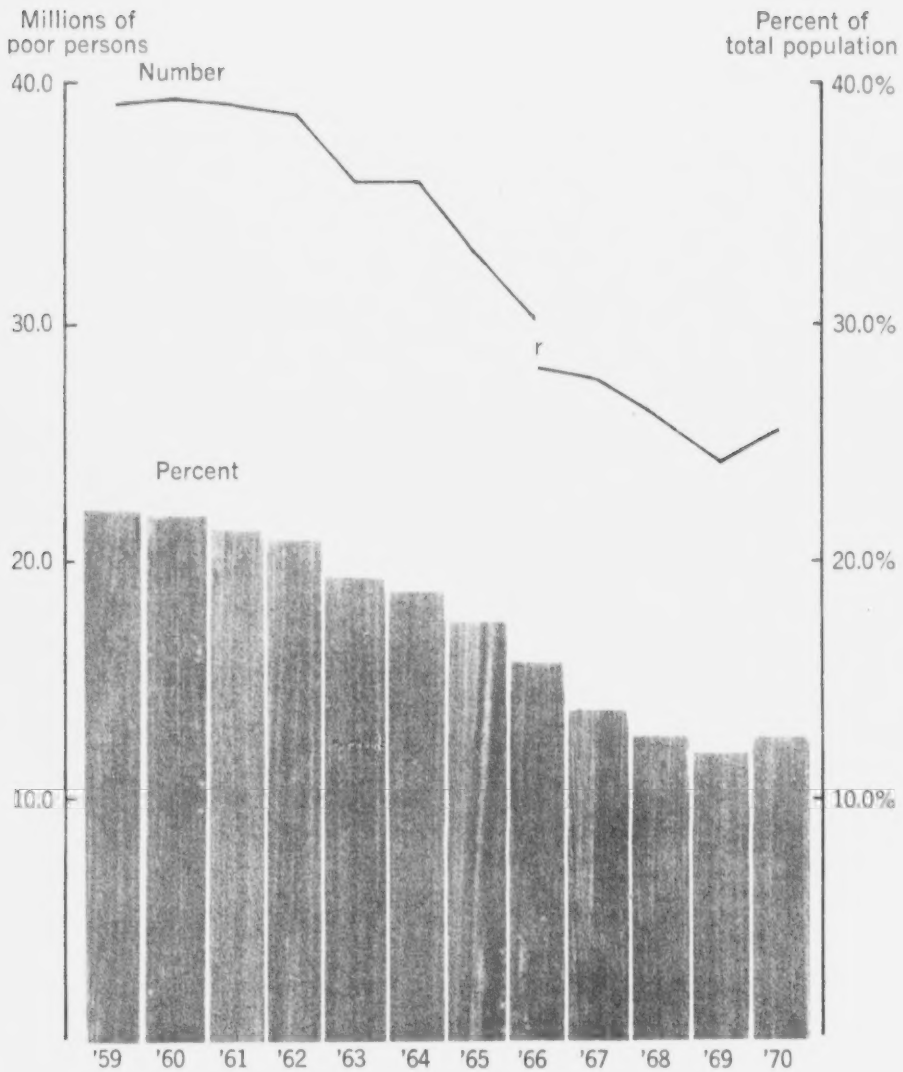

Millions of poor persons
Percent of total population
Number
40.0
30.0
20.0
10.0
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
r
Percent
'59
'60
'61
'62
'63
'64
'65
'66
'67
'68
'69
'70

Chart 26.

The poor by family status 1960 and 1970

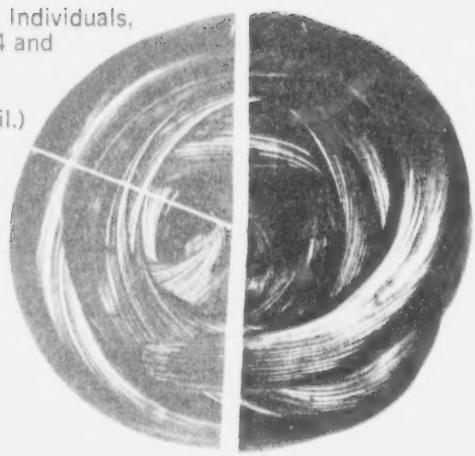
The reduction in the total number of poor persons in the past decade has been accounted for, primarily, by persons in male headed families. Consequently, in 1970

- poor persons in male headed families represented 5 out of every 10 poor persons, compared to 7 out of 10 in 1960.
- poor persons in female headed families and unrelated individuals represented 5 of every 10 poor persons, but in 1960 they accounted for only 3 of every 10.

TABLE 26.

	1970		1960	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent
Total	25,522	100.0	39,851	100.0
Persons in male headed families	12,879	50.5	27,678	69.5
Persons in female headed families	7,620	29.9	7,247	18.2
Unrelated individuals, age 14 and over	5,023	19.7	4,926	12.4

Poor persons 1970


Unrel. Individuals, age 14 and over 19.7% (5.0 mil.)
Persons in male headed families 50.5% (12.9 mil.)
Persons in female headed families 29.9% (7.6 mil.)

Poor persons 1960

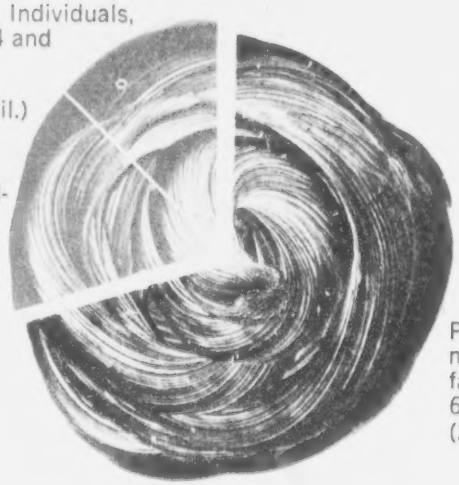

Unrel. Individuals, age 14 and over 12.4% (4.9 mil.)
Persons in female headed families 18.2% (7.2 mil.)
Persons in male headed families 69.5% (27.7 mil.)

Chart 27.

The number of poor families by work status of the family head 1960 to 1970

The greater likelihood of male family heads relative to female family heads to obtain work has accounted for their greater success in escaping poverty during the past decade. Between 1960 and 1970

- the number of families in poverty decreased by 2.9 million and
- nearly all of this decline occurred among families headed by males who worked.

TABLE 27.

	1970 (000)	1960 (000)	Change (000)
Total	5,158	8,097	2,939
Worked	2,865	5,719	2,854
Male	2,026	4,828	2,802
Female	838	891	53
Did not work	2,293	2,378	85

* Excludes those family heads in the Armed Forces who live off post or with their families on post.

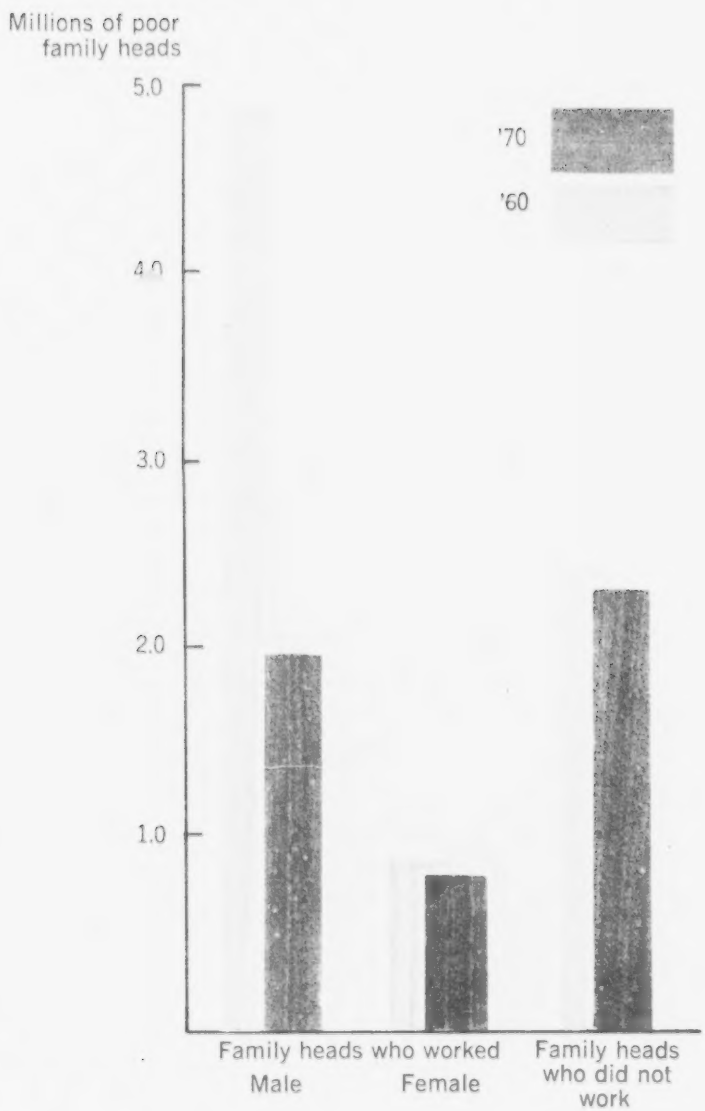

Millions of poor family heads
5.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
'70
'60
Family heads who worked
Male
Female
Family heads who did not work

Chart 28.

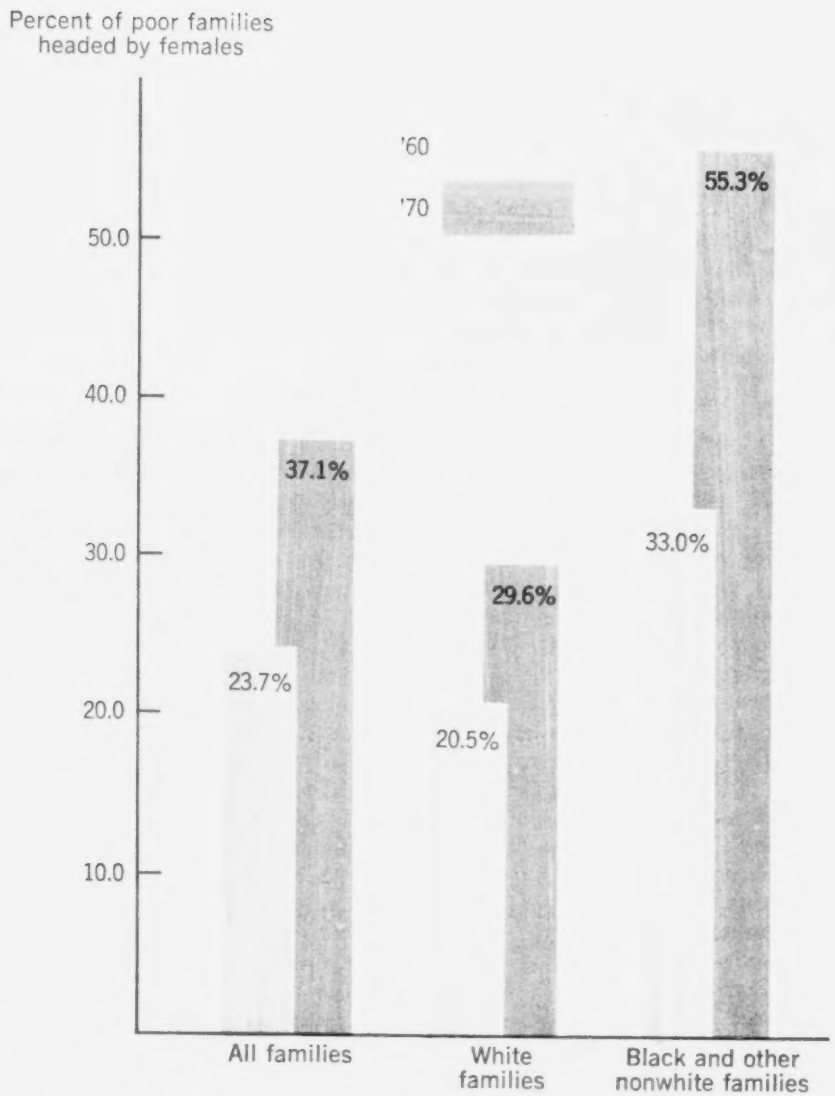
Poor female family heads as a proportion of all poor family heads by color 1960 and 1970

Among poor families, therefore, (both white and the black other nonwhites), the female headed family has become more common. Between 1960 and 1970

- the proportion of all poor white families headed by females rose from 21 to 30 percent and
- for black and other nonwhite families, from 33 to 55 percent.

TABLE 28.

	1970			1960		
	All family heads (000)	Female family heads (000)	Percent female	All family heads (000)	Female family heads (000)	Percent Female
Total	5,214	1,934	37.1	8,243	1,955	23.7
Whites	3,701	1,097	29.6	6,115	1,252	20.5
Blacks and other nonwhites	1,513	837	55.3	2,128	703	33.0


Percent of poor families headed by females
'60
'70
50.0
40.0
30.0
20.0
10.0
37.1%
23.7%
29.6%
20.5%
55.3%
33.0%
All families
White families
Black and other nonwhite families

FOOTNOTES

[1] Throughout the chartbook and statistical tables two different levels of the number of poor persons in 1970 will be observed—25.9 million and 25.5 million. The difference—about 400,000 individuals—represents children who are under 14 years of age and are unrelated individuals. These persons are included in the special tabulation that the Bureau of the Census provides the Office of Economic Opportunity (the former total) but excluded in the tabulations which the Census Bureau publishes (the latter total). Most of the charts and tables are based on the OEO special tabulations because detailed poverty statistics from the Census Bureau were not available at the time of this writing.

[2] The historical series of the number of poor persons, as shown in Chart 25 and Table 25, reflects revisions made over recent years in the definition of poverty as well as improvements in the statistical processing of income statistics. With regard to the former, two basic changes were made; first, all poverty lines from the base year 1963 were adjusted on the basis of the Consumer Price Index; and second, poverty lines for farm families and individuals were raised from 70 to 85 percent of corresponding nonfarm poverty lines. The combined impact of these two revisions resulted in a net increase of 360,000 poor families and 1.6 million poor persons in 1967. The present historical data reflects these changes. Regarding improvements in the processing of income statistics, the Bureau of the Census in 1966 introduced improved editing and allocation procedures. The main feature involved a more refined method for imputing missing income information. Because of coding errors in the processing of 1967 income statistics it was not possible to apply the above mentioned improvements to that year's data. Poverty statistics for that year, therefore, are not strictly comparable for those shown for 1966 and subsequent years. Despite these revisions and modifications it is still felt that the changes in the poverty population discussed in Section 5 are still generally valid. For a more detailed explanation of these revisions and improvements, see "24 Million Americans—Poverty in the United States: 1969," *Current Population Reports,* Series P-60, No. 76, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

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